

In strongly supporting the U.S. Military it is important to ensure that our service men and women are the best-trained and most equipped soldiers in the world.

Military Personnel

We have worked to secure expanded health benefits to Veterans, Guardsmen and Reservists, by supporting increases in hardship benefits, imminent danger pay, the elimination of out-of-pocket housing expenses and family separation allowance. Our efforts must continue on these important issues.

Iraq

The war in Iraq was ineffective because the U.S. military incursion could not make our country safer or the Middle East any less dangerous. Unilateral military action by the U.S. without broad international support will isolate America from our allies and thrust us into the position of becoming a common enemy in a volatile region where terrorism grows with each passing year.

Nevertheless it is important to remain committed to providing necessary supplies to our brave service men and women serving in both Iraq and Afghanistan. For example, seeing that the recent Defense Authorization Bill for fiscal year 2005, is provided with \$2 billion in essential equipment to protect our troops. This included added funds for armored HUMVEES, new body-armor and Ohio-made M1A2 Abrams tanks.

Buy American Efforts

We introduced two major amendments to the Defense Bill passed by U.S. House of Representatives last year. They would assist tool and die manufacturers, foundry operators and machinists to compete with larger defense subcontractors in procuring contracts from the U.S. Department of Defense.

The amendments would establish a technical assistance center to help these small companies work with the Pentagon and strengthen Buy America provisions that demand that at least half the contracts awarded to the defense industry are given to American companies. Enhancement of the Buy America provisions would stimulate U.S. manufacturing and machine tool industries while maintaining indigenous industrial base capabilities that would be used in times of war rather than depend on foreign suppliers for the production of key critical components.

Our employers are having a hard time competing with low-wage competitors in the Far East. We need a strong industrial base in America, and healthy small tool and die companies are essential to keeping that base strong.

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